

## GTA TODAY

# The vision of a digital government

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**GTA Executive Director**

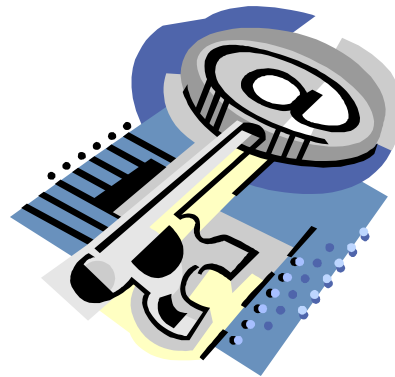
The Georgia Technology Authority is bringing state agencies together to achieve the vision of a digital government.

But what's really meant by digital government, and where does the vision take us?

It starts with a commitment to making state government more efficient, effective, and responsive through the use of information technology. The online experience is transforming the way customers interact with businesses, and as the general public becomes more comfortable with computers and Internet usage becomes more widespread, the demand for online access to government services is growing. Driver's license renewals, Internet voting, incorporating a business, participating in the bidding process for a government contract, paying taxes, paying a parking ticket, and ordering birth, death, and marriage certificates are

only a few examples of the varied services and functions that can be made available online.

Meeting the public's expecta-



tions requires us to view information technology with a new perspective. When an agency looks at information technology with this new perspective, it no longer sees itself as operating in isolation from other agencies. It sees itself as one part of a larger entity with many of the same goals and objectives, and it looks for ways to share resources to achieve greater efficiency and cost-savings.

To build the fully integrated, statewide information systems required for us to call ourselves a digital government, state agencies

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## And a new approach to strategic planning

A new approach to strategic planning for information-system resources is leading Georgia's move toward digital government. It's an approach where public policy goals, program goals, and documented business needs drive the selection of technology. GTA is introducing the process to state agencies in phases. GTA is also helping state agencies to obtain the additional resources they need to make a successful transition to this new way of thinking about the way state government uses digital technology.

**Sondra Rhoades-Johnson**, GTA's Chief Planning Officer, answers questions about strategic planning

and what our involvement means to your agencies. You're encouraged to submit your own questions. Send them to [sondrarj@gagta.com](mailto:sondrarj@gagta.com).

### Why is GTA redefining the strategic planning process?

We want to work with state agencies to make sure they are using information technology in the most effective way possible to achieve agency, department, and public policy goals. But we can't get there without a consistent and comprehensive method of strategic planning. This is the first time state government has looked at its in-

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## Georgia honored as national leader in Web services

Georgia continues to receive recognition as one of the nation's leaders in the use of information technology to deliver services to its citizens. The 2000 Digital State Survey recently ranked Georgia as first in two of eight categories and seventh overall when compared to other states' Web sites. And for the third year in row, Georgia placed among the top three state sites in the "Best of the Web" awards.

The 2000 Digital State Survey was conducted by the Center for Digital Government and the Progress and Freedom Foundation. It studied the use of digital technologies by state governments in the following eight areas: electronic

commerce, taxation/revenue, social services, law enforcement and the courts, digital democracy, management/administration, higher education, and K-12 education. Georgia ranked first in both electronic commerce and law enforcement and the courts.

**Secretary of State Cathy Cox** and the **Board of Regents** have been aggressively adding e-commerce services like corporate filings, professional licensing, document-ordering, and college tuition and fee payments. **Public Safety Commissioner Robert Hightower** and **GBI Director Buddy Nix** have been leading the effort to improve law enforcement services through technology. Felony record

checks, court calendars and rulings, and lists of sexual offenders are now available over the Internet.

The rankings were announced after a year-long study of all 50 states.

Meanwhile, the "Best of the Web" award further confirmed Georgia's status as one of the country's most innovative state governments in using the Internet to provide services and information. The evaluation of state Web sites was conducted by the Center for Digital Government, Government Technology, Public Technology Inc., and State Technologies. ■

## Who we are, what we do

The GTA consists of a 12-member Board of Directors and a Chief Information Officer, who also serves as the GTA's Executive Director. There are also six major operating divisions. Here are the members of the Leadership Team and a brief description of GTA's various responsibilities and functions.

### **Larry J. Singer** **Chief Information Officer** **GTA Executive Director**

Mr. Singer provides executive leadership for all aspects of GTA's operations.

### **Tom Wade** **Deputy Director and** **Chief Operating Officer**

Mr. Wade oversees GTA's daily operations and directs many facets of its essential business functions and processes. He is particularly involved with internal and external communications and internal IT operations. He works closely with

**Danette Joslyn-Gaul**, GTA General Counsel, who manages legal concerns and inter-governmental relations, and **Beverly Walker**, Director of Organizational Development, who is responsible for career development and activities affecting human resources.

### **Jim Flowers** **Deputy Director and General** **Manager of IT Modernization**

Mr. Flowers is responsible for ensuring a coordinated approach toward modernizing state government's IT infrastructure. This effort encompasses special research projects, an innovations center focusing on technology trends, and the promotion of cutting-edge interactive technologies, such as distance learning and video-teleconferencing. GTA partners with educational institutions and private industry as it evaluates the potential benefit new technologies might offer state government.

### **Sondra Rhoades-Johnson** **Chief Planning Officer**

The Planning Division provides assistance to state agencies as they develop strategic plans for information systems. The division reviews these agency plans to make sure they explain how specific systems enable agencies to achieve public policy goals and meet business or program-related needs. It promotes compatibility and the sharing of information among systems and looks for opportunities to use the same system in multiple agencies. To better manage the state's technology assets, the division also compiles and maintains inventories of various information-system components.

### **Cigdem Delano** **Chief Technology Officer**

The Technology Division works with state agencies to establish common standards for building in-

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## Meet the Board of Directors

Here are the Board's current members.

- ♦ **Thomas A. Fanning, Chairman**, Executive Vice President, Treasurer, and Chief Financial Officer, Georgia Power Company, Atlanta
- ♦ **Dean Alford**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Allied Utility Network, Conyers
- ♦ **Lisa M. Beale**, Executive Vice President, Research and Development, RealEstate.com, Atlanta
- ♦ **The Honorable L. Keith Brady**, Mayor, City of Newnan
- ♦ **Brent D. Layton**, President, Layton & Associates, Powder Springs
- ♦ **Wayne H. Lazarus**, Attorney, Stokes, Lazarus & Carmichael LLP, Atlanta
- ♦ **James D. Lester III**, Senior Vice President, Information Technology, AFLAC, Inc., Columbus
- ♦ **Joshua S. Levine**, Chief Technology Officer, E\*Trade Group, Alpharetta
- ♦ **Jacinta (Jay) C. Miller**, Director of Testing Services, Total System Services, Inc., Columbus
- ♦ **Connell Stafford**, Vice President, Corporate Affairs, The Coca-Cola Company, Atlanta
- ♦ **Sam J. Zamarripa**, Chief Marketing Officer and Director, HispanBiz.com, Atlanta
- ♦ **Freeman Walker** (ex officio member), Acting Director, Veterans Medical Center, Decatur

### How the Board is chosen

The Governor appoints seven members, the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House appoint two member each, and the Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court appoints one non-voting member. The Governor designates a member to serve as Chair. Members must be employed in the private sector and have high-level experience in managing large IT enterprises. They serve staggered three-year terms, although some of the initial members were appointed to one-year terms. ■

- ♦ *You'll find biographical sketches of board members on our Web site at [www.gagta.com](http://www.gagta.com).*

## Board votes to outsource telecommunications

A resolution directing the GTA to consolidate the telecommunication needs of all state agencies was approved by the Board at its quarterly meeting on October 16, 2000. The Board's action could lead to the outsourcing of wireless, local service, long distance, Internet access, data network and other services to a consortium of private-sector companies.

State government represents an impressive market for telecommunications companies, and the outsourcing agreement is expected to result in significant rate reductions for agencies while enhancing service delivery.

The potential benefits from outsourcing could extend beyond state government to include city and county governments — including school districts — across Georgia. Through the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) and the Association

County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG), GTA is encouraging local governments to take part in developing the upcoming RFP.



Lower rates for telecommunication services are just the beginning of the benefits to local governments and the communities they serve. An alliance of state and local governments would create a large enough customer base to make it economically feasible to bring state-of-the-art telecommunications — including high-speed data

lines and Internet access — to even the most rural communities. A modern information infrastructure will promote economic develop by providing business and industries with a major incentive to locate in Georgia.

Development of the RFP is expected to begin in the second quarter of 2001. ■

- ♦ *The telecommunications initiative was the subject of an article in The Wall Street Journal on October 4, 2000. A copy of the article is available on the GTA Web site at [www.gagta.com](http://www.gagta.com).*

- ♦ *See page 5 for more news from the Board of Directors.*

## **A new approach to strategic planning, from page 1**

vestment in information technology with an enterprise view, and strategic planning brings it all together — public policy, business needs, procurement, and standards and architecture.

### **How is GTA redefining the strategic planning process?**

The process of redefining strategic planning is taking place in phases. With our first phase, GTA is focusing on each agency's core business functions. This term simply means the agency's primary services rather than traditional administrative processes like human resources, facility management, legal services, fiscal management, or other essential but "overhead" processes.

An agency's business strategy and need for information should form the basis for its information-technology strategy. Planning for information technology should take place within the context of an agency's primary business and define how IT furthers the agency's mission and objectives. In other words, IT is an enabler and not a driver. This is a departure for many organizations since it focuses not only on how resources are used but why they are selected in the first place.

We want to create a strategic planning culture within state government. We want to partner with agencies and provide training and coaching. Many agencies think we are going to grade what they do, but this is not a grading situation. It's a learning opportunity for all agencies.

### **What will take place in subsequent phases of the strategic planning rollout?**

We'll focus on the development

of statewide application, database, and technical systems. This will allow us to identify opportunities for sharing both component-based applications and data among various agencies. It also means we can really begin moving forward with a seamless customer service model, including a single portal to state government and other important initiatives. During subsequent phases, we'll also add more details to the business models being introduced as part of the first phase.

### **How does strategic planning relate to procurement?**

Agencies must clearly link requests for IT purchases to the public policy and program goals in their strategic plans.

### **What kind of guidance is GTA providing in the area of strategic planning?**

Agencies are required to submit strategic IT plans annually for GTA to review. In August, we released a strategic planning methodology that included detailed guidelines for developing these plans. We also screened consultants with experience in strategic planning and developed a list for agencies to use in selecting outside resources to provide additional assistance. However, it's not the role of consultants to write an agency's strategic plan. It's an opportunity to use them as a resource to help build a strategic planning culture.

Meeting face-to-face with agency officials is also important for us. GTA hosted a special meeting on November 16 to discuss the strategic planning process with agencies. Consultants from the approved list were also invited. On our Web site, we've provided answers to many of the questions agencies asked at the meeting, and we're encouraging agencies to continue submitting questions. GTA is committed to

working in partnership with agencies, and we'll look for other opportunities to meet with agencies and answer their questions.

We are also setting up cross-functional teams at GTA to work with agencies. These teams will include someone from each of our major divisions, and they will be assigned to partner with specific agencies. It's one of our most important goals to serve as an advocate for agencies in helping them to obtain the IT resources they need to achieve their mission and program objectives. ■

**More information is available on the Web at [www.gagta.com](http://www.gagta.com)**

- ♦ *Questions and answers from the November 16 meeting on strategic planning*
- ♦ *GTA strategic planning methodology*
- ♦ *List of approved strategic-planning consultants*

## **GTA sponsoring seminar on information management**

Make plans now to attend a special GTA seminar on information management. It's scheduled for Tuesday, January 30, 2001, beginning at 9:30 a.m. GTA will announce the location at a later date.

The seminar will examine strategies to help organizations collect, store, and analyze information. It will also look at ways to integrate information from numerous sources and use it effectively in making decisions about various aspects of an organization's operations.

For more information, send e-mail to [miclark@gagta.com](mailto:miclark@gagta.com) or call 404-463-2347. ■

## Focus on: Customer Relationship Management

Surveys by the federal government and various state governments confirm that customers want a choice in how they access public services and information. Besides the Internet, survey respondents cite face-to-face interactions, mail, telephone, fax, CD-ROM, kiosks, interactive voice response systems, and interactive television as options.

Regardless of how customers choose to access government services, they expect consistent, high-quality service. And as their needs and circumstances change, customers also expect to switch from one form of access to another without repeating conversations or providing the same information more than once.

Customer relationship management (CRM) refers to building systems and processes that are customer-centric and provide anytime, anywhere access and personalized service at every point of contact. Several companies offer software systems to help organizations achieve this level of integration and make the same customer-

### Who we are, what we do from page 2

formation systems. Common standards enable various agencies to share information and use the same system for different purposes. The division provides oversight and program management of all technology resources for projects costing more than \$1 million. It also promotes common security standards. Security is a critically important concern in today's open-architecture environment. Georgia's commitment to digital government and greater online access to public information and services demands the strictest and most comprehensive security standards possible.

### Tim Burgess Chief Financial Officer

The Financial Division reviews agency budgets for information systems. It also reviews proposed purchases of information-technology supplies, materials, services, and equipment and makes these purchases on behalf of agencies. Before approving a purchase

request, the division makes sure it's linked to the agency's strategic plan and budget. The division also handles the GTA's own budgeting and procurement processes.

### Gina Tiedemann Director, GeorgiaNet

The GeorgiaNet Division offers Web-hosting and design services to all state agencies. It maintains the state of Georgia's award-winning Web site and is leading the development of a single portal, or online access point, to state government. A single-portal will make it possible for the general public to access government services and information through one Web site — quickly, easily, and without knowing which agency is responsible for what service. ■

### GTA Board meeting

Monday, January 22, 2001, 2 p.m.  
The Equitable Building  
100 Peachtree Street  
24th floor, Atlanta  
Webcast at [www.gagta.com](http://www.gagta.com)

## State employee purchase program a possibility

The GTA Board of Directors has approved a resolution calling on GTA to explore the possibility of an information-technology purchasing program for state employees.

The program would be modeled after similar initiatives at several large, private-sector companies. It would allow state employees to purchase computers and related equipment at a discount through payroll deduction. The equipment would most likely be purchased from a single vendor, who would be selected



through a process of competitive bidding. The purchases would not be subsidized by the state in any way, and employees could use the equipment in any way they choose since the purchases would be made entirely with their own personal funds. Teachers would be considered state employees and thereby eligible to participate.

The program is seen as an effective way to promote telecommuting, which is one option to help reduce traffic congestion and smog in Georgia's metropolitan areas. It's also part of a larger strategy to address the digital divide and broaden access to computers. Changes to state law may be required before the program is implemented. ■



### **Vision of a digital government from page 1**

must also agree on common standards for computer software, hardware, and related resources. When we talk about digital government, we are referring to the use of information systems that enable agencies to automate more of their processes and bring others online. These systems must make it possible for agencies to seamlessly exchange information among themselves. And they must make it possible for the general public and businesses to access government services and information through a single Web site — quickly, easily, and without knowing which agency is responsible for what service.

### **Redesigning our business processes**

Meeting the demand for easier and more responsive access to government services and information is only part of the challenge. Through information technology, the private sector has simplified processes, increased productivity, and reduced operating costs. Government must follow the private sector's example. Since every resident is a "stockholder" in govern-

ment, the need to achieve these same operating efficiencies is even more compelling for the public sector than for the private sector. Using information technology to redesign our business processes can provide state employees with the tools they need to perform more efficiently and effectively in doing the public's business, and it can lead to greater accountability in pursuing public policy and program objectives.

Security and confidentiality is another area where the standard for government is higher than for the private sector. Since government can require the submission of highly personal information, it must take greater steps to protect against unauthorized access to its online transactions and information systems. In other instances, such as voting, the event and the process are so unique and important to the foundation of our nation and society that it becomes absolutely essential to safeguard the integrity of the online transaction.

### **Working together to transform government**

None of these goals can be accomplished unless state agencies come together with a collaborative

determination to do whatever it takes to achieve the vision of a digital government. The challenge of transforming government is significant, but so are the rewards. Opening public services and information to greater access through the Internet can help residents feel closer to government and less disconnected from the agencies and processes that are meant to serve them. The enhanced accountability that results from redesigned business processes can lead to greater public confidence in government.

Our state's elected representatives assigned the responsibility for leading these efforts to the Georgia Technology Authority. We look forward to working in partnership with other state agencies, legislators, educational institutions, the business community, citizen advocacy groups, and others to create Georgia's digital future. We embrace the challenge of transforming government. ■

**We want to know what you think  
about *GTA Today*. Send your  
feedback to [miclark@gagta.com](mailto:miclark@gagta.com).**

***GTA Today* is available on the  
Web at [www.gagta.com](http://www.gagta.com)**

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